

Appl. No. 10/708,573
Amtd. Dated September 29, 2005
Reply to Office action of June 13, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. Rejection of claims 1-3, 6-10, 13, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e):

Claims 1-3, 6-10, 13, and 14 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by Tanaka et al (US 6,797,526).

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Response:

Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended to overcome this rejection. Claims 1 and 8 now each recite a limitation of "selectively utilizing equipment and process parameters so as to optimize the quality and performance of processed semiconductor products". This amendment to claims 1 and 8 is fully supported in the specification, and no new matter has been added. The present invention detects the quality of products produced by specific equipment and specific process parameters, and allows the equipment and process parameters to be changed so as to provide the best product quality and to optimize the performance of the semiconductor products.

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On the other hand, Tanaka et al. provides a method of detecting defects in semiconductor products and for determining the semiconductor equipment that caused the defects. Tanaka et al. does not teach a method for selecting equipment and processes so as to optimize the quality and performance of products, and instead 15 only tries to find the root causes of defects.

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The performance of manufactured products is a major consideration in semiconductor manufacturing, and the lack of defects does not always indicate the optimum performance of products. Therefore, the present invention is patentably 25 distinguished from the Tanaka et al. patent by selecting equipment and process parameters that optimize both the quality and the performance of semiconductor

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products. Claims 2-3, 6-7, 9-10, 13, and 14 are dependent on independent claims 1 and 8, and should be allowed if claims 1 and 8 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 1-3, 6-10, 13, and 14 is respectfully requested.

5 2. Rejection of claims 4, 5, 11, and 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 4, 5, 11, and 12 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being anticipated by Tanaka et al (US 6,797,526).

Response:

10 Claims 4, 5, 11, and 12 are dependent on claims 1 and 8, and should be allowed if claims 1 and 8 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 4, 5, 11, and 12 is respectfully requested.

15 In view of the above arguments in favor of patentability, the applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Sincerely yours,

Winston Hsu

Date: September 29, 2005

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is 12 hours behind the Taiwan time, i.e. 9 AM in D.C. = 9 PM in Taiwan.)